

**Looking Forward to a Great Year
Council President Scott Peters, First District
For the La Jolla Village News, January 2008**

This year promises to be an exciting one for the nation, the city and our own community of La Jolla. California's early presidential primary offers us the chance to influence the course of national politics, and elections at the local level offer the opportunity for fresh voices in our civic dialogue. It will be a bittersweet year for me personally, as it marks the end of my eight years on the City Council. It has been an honor and privilege to serve you, and I hope you've noticed the positive difference in our community.

We accomplished much together over the past seven years, addressing long-standing infrastructure challenges in La Jolla such as congestion at the Throat and Bird Rock traffic issues. My list of goals for 2008 is equally ambitious.

The Bird Rock traffic calming and beautification project was a collaborative effort by the City, community leaders, and nationally-renowned urban planning experts to slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety in the area. The plan, which includes street repaving, sewer refurbishing, sidewalk repair, parking improvements and neighborhood landscaping, will be complete by summertime. I think you'll be pleased by our efforts to make La Jolla Boulevard more walkable and attractive for shoppers, diners and residents.

Other beautification efforts include the resurfacing of many local streets, including La Jolla Shores Drive and Cliffridge Avenue. The City Council dedicated funds to allow for five times more street resurfacing last year than in the previous year, and I intend to improve on that effort for 2008. We'll break ground on another undergrounding utilities project, and I will continue to monitor AT&T's progress as they perform catch-up work in the neighborhoods where cable and energy lines have already been undergrounded, improving sightlines and neighborhood appeal.

The question of how to address historic parking shortages in and around the Village has vexed our community for decades. It certainly dominates the civic debate today, but we are closer than ever to finding an answer to the question. The proposed parking framework currently in the public review process will come before the City Council this year for discussion. I hope you will join me in seeking a plan that improves parking conditions and creates a better village.

In addition to the lack of parking, La Jollans face another street nuisance I hope to address this year—the problem of oversized vehicles such as RVs parking on public streets near the coast for extended periods of time. Some of these vehicles remain parked in front of homes for months at a time, taking up precious parking spaces and restricting access to driveways and alleys. I will propose rules that allow oversized vehicles access to San Diego's beach neighborhoods in a way that respects the residential character of those communities.

I am committed to addressing a number of coastal infrastructure issues this year, including replacing aging lifeguard towers at Children's Pool, the Cove and the Shores. When the City gains access to the public bond markets this year, we will secure the money to design and renovate towers that are outdated and crumbling to the point of posing a public safety hazard.

Other beach efforts this year include the start up of additional storm water diverters along the coast, plans to improve the parking lots at Windansea and Kellogg Park, and the issuance of a permit system for kayak operators in order to alleviate vehicle and pedestrian congestion in La Jolla Shores, along and at the foot of Avenida de la Playa.

The City received its final answer on the future of the Children's Pool last year, when the California Supreme Court allowed the trial court's ruling to stand. That court order requires the City to restore the Pool to its 1941 condition by removing some of the sand buildup. In the coming months, the City will conduct an environmental review to determine how to comply with the terms of the order in the most humane and environmentally responsible way, and the City will present those plans to the California Coastal Commission. I am hopeful that a reasonable solution can be worked out to obey the court order and make the beach and the water safe for children and families to enjoy.

I look forward to the year ahead and the many accomplishments we will achieve together.